

43 An Excellent Ballad of Patient Grissel.

To the Tune of, *The Brides Good-Morrow.*



A Noble Marques
As he did ride a hunting
hard by a foreign side,
A fair and comely Maiden
As she did sit a spinning
his gentle eye espied,
Most fair and lovely
And of a comely grace was she,
although in simple attire,
She sung full sweetly
Which pleased the Lords heart on fire:
The more he loved the more he might,
Beauty bred his hearts delight
And to this Damsel
then he sent his speed,
God speed quoth he thou famous flower,
Fair with is of this homely Bower,
Where Love and Vertue,
do his sweetest content,
With comely gesture
And modest mild behaviour,
she becom welcome then,
He entertained him,
in a friendly manner,
and all his Gentlemen:
The Noble Marques,
In a heart felt such a flame,
which his senses at first
Durst he fair Maiden,

Shew me soon what is thy name,
I mean to make thee my Wife,
Grissel is my name quoth she,
Far unfit for your degree,
A silly Maiden,
and of Parents poor:
Say Grissel thou art rich he said,
A virtuous, fair, and comely Maid,
Grant me the Love,
and I will ask no more:
At length she consented,
And being both contented,
they Married were with speed:
Her Country Kisset
Was changed to silk and velvet,
as to her state accord;
And when that she
Was truly tired in the same,
her beauty shined most bright,
far staining every
Other fair and Princely Dame,
that did appear in her sight.
Many envying her therefore,
because she was of Parents poor,
And with her Lord and his
great wife did raise:
Some said this, and some said that,
And some did call her buggers by,
And to her Lord
they would her off despise.

O noble Marques
Quoth they why dost thou wrong us
thus basely for to wed:
Who might have gotten,
An Honourable Lady,
into your Princely bed,
Who will not now,
Your noble lineage deride,
which shall hereafter be born,
That are of blood so base,
Born by the mothers side,
the which will bring them in scorn.
Put her therefore quite away,
And take to you a Lady gay,
Whose in your Lineage
may renowned be
Thus every day they came to prate,
That maliced Grissels modest state,
Who all this while
took it most patiently.
When that the Marques
Did see that they were bent thus,
against his faithful wife,
Whom he most dearly
tenderly and intirely,
he loved as his life,
Binding in secret
for to probe her patient heart.
Thereby her foes to disgrace,
Thinking to shew her
a hard and courteous part.
That men might pity her case,
Great with child this Lady was,
And at last it came to pass,
Two goodly children,
at one birth she had,
A Son and a Daughter God had sent:
Which did their Mother well content,
And which did make
their Fathers heart full glad.
Great Royal Sailing
Was at these childrens Christening,
and Princely triumph made.
Six weeks together
All Nobles that came thither,
were entertained and laid,
And when that all this pleasant
Sporting quite was done,
the Marques a Messenger sent,
For his young Daughter
And his pretty smiling Son,
declaring his full intent.
How had the babes must murdered be
For so the Marques did decree.
Come let me have
the children then he said,
Which that fair Grissel wept full sore,
She wrung her hands & said no more,
O my dear Lord
I will have his will obeyed.

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The second part to the same Tune.



We took the Babies,
 Even from the nursing Ladies,
 Between her tender arms,
 She offer wishes,
 With many sorrowful kisses,
 That she might save their harms.
 Farwe, farwel,
 A thousand times my Children dear,
 Never shall I see you again,
 It is long of me
 Your sad and woful Mother here,
 For woe sake both must be pain,
 Had I been born of Royal race,
 You might have lived in happy case,
 But you must dye,
 For my unworthiness,
 Come Messenger of Death quoth she,
 Take my dearest babes to thee,
 And to their father
 My complaints express,
 He took the children,
 And to his Noble master,
 He bore them then with speed,
 Who in secret sent them,
 Unto a Noble Lady,
 To be brought up in deed.
 Then to fair Grissel
 With a teary heart he goes.
 Where she sat miled all alone,
 A pleasant gesture,
 And a lovely look she shows,
 As if no grief she had known.
 Quoth he my children now are slain,
 What think'st thou fair Grissel of the same,
 Part Grissel now,
 Declare thy mind to me,
 With you my Lord are pleased with it,
 For Grissel thinks the action fit,
 Both I and mine
 At your command will be.

My Nobles murmur,
 Fair Grissel at thy honour
 and I no joy can have,
 Till thou be banished
 Both from my court and presence
 as they usually crave,
 Thou must be stripped
 Out of thy stately garments all,
 and as thou comest to me.
 In homely gray,
 Instead of bills and purple pall,
 now all thy clothing must be
 The Lady thou must be no more.
 For I thy Lord which grieves me so
 The worst life
 must now content thy mind,
 A groat to thee I must not give,
 Thee to maintain whilst I do live,
 Against my Grissel
 such great foes I find.
 When gentle Grissel
 Did hear these woful tidings,
 the tears stood in her eyes,
 Nothing she answered,
 No words of discontentment,
 did from her lips arise,
 Her Velvet Gown
 Most patiently she stripped off,
 her kirtle of silk with the same,
 Her Kisset Gown
 was brought again with many a scoff,
 to bear them her self she did frame;
 When she was dressed in this array,
 And ready was to part away,
 God send long life
 unto my Lord quoth she.
 Let no offence be found in this,
 To give me Lord a parting kiss
 With watry eyes
 farewell my Dear said she.

From Princely Pallace,
 Unto her fathers Cottage,
 poor Grissel now is gone,
 Full fifteen winters,
 She lived there contented
 no wrong she thought upon,
 And at that time through
 All the Land the speeches went
 the Marquess should married be.
 Unto a Noble Lady great
 And of high Descent
 and to the same all Parties did agree,
 The Marquess sent for Grissel fair
 The brides bed-chamber to prepare,
 That nothing therein
 might be found amiss.
 The bride was with her brother come,
 Which was great joy to all and some,
 But Grissel took all this
 most patiently,
 And in the morning
 When as they should be wedded,
 her patience there was tried,
 (rule) was charmed,
 Her self in friendly manner
 for to attend the bride,
 Most willing
 She gave consent to do the same
 the bride in bravery was dressed,
 And presently
 The Noble Marquess thither came
 with all his Lords at his request.
 Grissel I will ask of thee,
 If to this match thou wilt agree,
 He thinks thy looks,
 are wondrous wondrous cov,
 Altho that they all began to smile.
 And Grissel she replied the while
 God send Lord Marquess
 many years of joy.
 The Marquess was moved,
 To see his best beloved
 thus patient in distress.
 He slept unto her
 And by the hand he took her
 these words he did express.
 Thou art the bride
 And all the brides I mean to have,
 these two thine own children be.
 The youthful Lady,
 On her knees did blessing crave,
 her brother as well as she,
 And you that envied her estate,
 Whom I have made my chosen mate,
 Now blush for shame,
 and honour vertu us life,
 The Chronicles of lasting fame,
 Shall her more extoll the name,
 Of patient Grissel
 my most constant wife:

FINIS.